

# Antibiotic Stewardship Toolkit

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## PASSING FOOD PURCHASING RESOLUTIONS

### Background

Each year, 23,000 Americans die as a result of antibiotic resistant infections.<sup>1</sup> Longer, more expensive hospital stays for treating resistant infections cost the U.S. healthcare sector an estimated \$21 to \$34 billion annually.<sup>2</sup> According to government estimates, approximately 80% of antibiotics sold in the United States are used in industrial animal agriculture, and about 70% of these include antibiotics that are also used to treat human infections. These antibiotics are given routinely to otherwise healthy food animals to compensate for overcrowded and unsanitary living conditions. It is now widely accepted that this practice is directly contributing to the rise in antibiotic resistant infections.

Across the country, health professionals are stepping up and developing resolutions calling for an end to the procurement of meat produced with the routine (non-therapeutic) use of medically important antibiotics, to preserve the efficacy of these drugs for human medicine. As a health professional, you can use your voice, organize with your colleagues, and organize within your hospital or professional association to develop a resolution to stop the procurement. Together, we can send a message to the marketplace that this unhealthy food production practice is unacceptable. The healthcare foodservice industry is a good place to start, with \$14 billion per year spent on food and beverage.

### The Toolkit

Health Care Without Harm has developed this Toolkit of helpful resources to get you started. Whether you are a nurse, a foodservice employee, a dietitian, or a doctor, there's a way for all health professionals to get involved.

### The Toolkit includes the following:

- How-to guide for organizing the development and passage of a resolution in your facility, professional association or medical society
- Sample resolution templates

Please help us build a healthier food production system and end this misuse of medically important antibiotics. Use your voice to stop the procurement of meat and poultry produced with the routine use of antibiotics!

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*More than 300 leading medical organizations, including the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics agree that we must address the routine and non-therapeutic uses of antibiotics in animal agriculture as part of a comprehensive strategy to address antibiotic resistant infections and preserve the efficacy of antibiotics for health care.*

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# Resolution Development Guidance

Are you interested in passing a resolution in your health care facility to address antibiotic resistance by eliminating the purchasing of meat produced with non-therapeutic antibiotics? Here are suggestions to get started:

## 1. LEARN ABOUT THE ISSUE

- ✓ [Stream HCWH webinars](#) to learn about the links between antibiotic use on farms and antibiotic resistant infections in humans, and how doctors, dietitians, nurses, hospital foodservice staff, and other public health advocates can play in protecting our antibiotics.

- ✓ Share HCWH's white paper with colleagues: [Expanding Antibiotic Stewardship: The Role of Health Care in Eliminating Antibiotic Overuse in Animal Agriculture](#)

## 2. GATHER A TEAM

- ✓ If you are a clinician, introduce yourself to foodservice staff at your facility and talk about the issue of antibiotic resistance and overuse of antibiotics in meat production.

**TIP:** *It is important to have foodservice directors or staffs involved in the process from the beginning since they will be responsible for implementing procurement components of the resolution, and understand supply, distribution, and food budget concerns. If the foodservice staff are resistant, you may provide them examples of other facilities that have implemented similar programs or put them in touch with a regional organizer from Health Care Without Harm to discuss support and strategies.*

- ✓ If you are a foodservice staff person, talk to the clinicians you know or investigate which clinicians are involved with the antibiotic stewardship program in your facility.

**TIP:** *Discuss ways in which your facility can adopt a Balanced Menus, Less Meat, Better Meat strategy—to first reduce the amount of meat on facility menus and then source healthier meat produced without the routine use of antibiotics. Download several resources, including recipes for hospitals, through our [Less Meat, Better Meat: Balanced Menus Initiative](#).*

## 3. DRAFT A RESOLUTION

- ✓ Refer to examples of resolutions that hospital facilities across the nation have already passed:
  - [University of California at San Francisco Medical Center](#)
  - [University of Washington Medical Center](#)

**TIP:** *You may consider a scheduled phase out plan as a strategy.*

- ✓ Bring a draft of the resolution to your facility's Sustainability or Green Team.

**TIP:** *If your facility is part of a university with a medical school, you may want consider engaging the Academic Senate Committee for its approval. You may consider collecting signatures before presenting the draft or wait until you've gotten feedback.*

- ✓ Allow for revisions, discussions, and a final review from the internal team you have gathered and other committees you have brought this to.

**TIP:** *Ideally the resolution is signed and/or endorsed by the administration within your facility. In the case the resolution is developed by an Academic Senate Committee, it will need to be approved by the Academic Senate.*

## 4. PUBLICIZE YOUR EFFORTS INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

- ✓ Download and print out [posters](#) and a [table tent](#) for use in your facility to educate staff, patients, and visitors.

- ✓ Publicize an article in your internal newsletter or magazine about the healthy changes in your foodservice procurement.

- ✓ Organize a presentation for the staff and/or a Grand Rounds presentation about the issue of antibiotic resistance and industrialized meat production.

- ✓ Host a barbecue, holiday meal, or other special events to highlight the healthy changes.

**TIP:** *Track the volume of meat reduction and sustainable meat procurement as the program is implemented. These will be very handy numbers for press releases, interviews, and any publications.*

## 5. NOTIFY HEALTH CARE WITHOUT HARM ABOUT YOUR RESOLUTION

- ✓ Become recognized as part of the national movement to eliminate the misuse of antibiotics in meat production and preserve these important drugs for human health!

# Resolution Implementation Guidance

## Implementation guidance for organizations with healthcare facilities or foodservice operators as members

1. Disseminate and encourage member engagement in associated public advocacy opportunities.
2. Review the use of antibiotics in the production of food animals and the role this plays in the development of human antibiotic resistance.
3. Explain the role a health facility can play in educating patients/clients, advocating in pending federal policy, promoting the development and passage of purchasing resolutions within their individual organization.
4. Provide guidance purchasing policy language for consideration for adoption by facilities (UCSF internal purchasing policy language is available).
5. Provide product lists of food items that meet the criteria of meat raised without non-therapeutic antibiotics (may choose to collaborate with HCWH or other outside organization to generate appropriate lists).
6. Track and report the passage of individual healthcare facility policies to phase out the purchase of meats raised without non-therapeutic antibiotics.(May choose to use this site to track resolutions/policies in collaboration with HCWH.)

## Implementation guidance for organizations with health professional or clinician members:

1. Provide educational sessions at new or existing conferences, webinars, and other outlets provided by the organization to:
  - ✓ Review the public health concern of antibiotic resistance.
  - ✓ Review the use of antibiotics in the production of food animals and the role this plays in the development of human antibiotic resistance.
  - ✓ Explain the role health professionals can play in educating patients/clients, advocating in pending federal policy, promoting the development and passage of purchasing resolutions within affiliated healthcare organizations.
2. Disseminate and encourage member engagement in associated public advocacy opportunities.

# Sample Professional Organization Resolution Language

This sample can be used as an aid for drafting a resolution that addresses the relationship between antibiotic stewardship and the overuse of antibiotics in animal agriculture. The following is a variety of sample language and action items gathered from existing resolutions and policies passed by academic medical centers and health professional organizations throughout the country.

## Whereas:

- ✓ Antibiotic resistance is an important and growing public health problem; more than two million people in the United States are sickened every year with antibiotic resistant infections, and at least 23,000 people die each year as a result.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ Approximately 80% of antibiotics sold in the United States are used for animal agriculture, primarily on animals that are not sick, but rather to promote growth of animals, and to allow them to be raised in crowded and unhealthy conditions.<sup>4,5</sup>
- ✓ There is a growing body of research that links the development of antibiotic resistant bacteria to the overuse of antibiotics in of animal agriculture, presenting a serious risk to human health.<sup>6,7</sup>
- ✓ There is a strong consensus among independent experts, including the U.S. Institute of Medicine/National Academy of Science and the World Health Organization that antibiotic use in agriculture contributes to growing antibiotic resistance. More than 300 organizations, including the American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, and Health Care Without Harm, have advocated ending the non-therapeutic use of medically important antibiotics as feed additives.<sup>8,9,10</sup>
- ✓ Non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in livestock was banned in Sweden in 1980s, Denmark in the 1990s, and in the rest European Union in 2006, but multiple attempts to ban this practice in the US over the last 30 years have been thwarted by the factory farming and pharmaceutical industries.<sup>11</sup>
- ✓ Antibiotic resistance is increasing across the country, 10 as is the use of antibiotics in animal agriculture.<sup>13</sup>
- ✓ The (name of the organization) has an opportunity to take a leadership role on this important public health issue, in partnership with other respected organizations, but has not yet done so, now, and
- ✓ Several hospitals and school systems across the country are already committing to procuring meat raised without non-therapeutic antibiotics<sup>14,15</sup>

## Therefore, be it resolved that (name of the organization):

- ✓ Opposes the routine use of non-therapeutic antibiotics in animal agriculture.
- ✓ Supports and advocates for federal and state legislation that eliminates the use of non-therapeutic antibiotics in animal agriculture with appropriate monitoring for compliance.
- ✓ Calls on health organizations and healthcare institution food services to phase out procurement of meat produced with the use of non-therapeutic antibiotics.
- ✓ Supports the development of procurement policies by network/member hospitals and healthcare facilities that phase out the purchase of meats produced with non-therapeutic antibiotics.
- ✓ Educates members, staff, policymakers, and the public about the significant health risks created by the routine use of antibiotics in animal agriculture and the importance of preserving antibiotics for therapeutic use in humans.
- ✓ Encourages all members, staff, and the larger community to reduce or eliminate their own purchases of meat raised with non-therapeutic antibiotics.
- ✓ Develops partnerships with other concerned organizations to advocate against the indiscriminate use of antibiotics in agriculture.

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Health Care Without Harm seeks to transform the health sector worldwide, without compromising patient safety or care, to become ecologically sustainable and a leading advocate for environmental health and justice.

This paper was produced by Health Care Without Harm's national Healthy Food in Health Care program, which harnesses the purchasing power and expertise of the healthcare sector to advance the development of a sustainable food system.

Visit [www.noharm.org](http://www.noharm.org) for more information.

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Passing Food Purchasing Resolutions

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